

# SPIRITUAL

# TELEGRAPH

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

PARTRIDGE AND BRITTON, PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS, NO. 300 BROADWAY—TERMS, TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE; SINGLE COPIES, FIVE CENTS.

VOL. II.—NO. 29.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1853.

WHOLE NO., 81.

## The Principles of Nature.

CAUSE AND CURE OF CRIME.  
NO. III.

Man's inner nature, instead of being vicious and depraved, is plenary with every human excellence, beauty, and use. The elements of all individual and society harmony is in him. He bears in his nature all the laws necessary to govern and control and beautify him, in every period of his history. He is the focal concentration of all beauty and harmony, or, as Swedenborg says, the "center of influxes of the celestial, spiritual, and natural universes," which means, that he is a center of all truth, excellence, beauty, and use—the microcosm of the universe. The free and spontaneous outer growth of these inherent beauties and uses produces the man of destiny, while their suppression, restraint, or perversion produces the man of crime, of sin, and shame—the man of misery, wretchedness, want, and woe. The continual spontaneous outer growth of these inner potencies is what we call development, or progress, while the suppression or perversion of it is the birth of deformity and vice. Every faculty, instinct, passion, and appetite of man is Divine, and he has a warrant direct from the Sovereign of the universe—a warrant that no human law can supersede or annul—for the legitimate growth and exercise of them. No human law, creed, or institution whatever can invalidate his claims to this growth and exercise, nor rise in sanctity above them. A true and harmonious human life, individually and socially, is the highest revelation of God's will on earth. Its chapters and verses are each and all Divine, and have a sanctifying and saving efficacy evermore. The descent of the New Jerusalem to the earth is only through the human soul—through the spontaneous outgrowth of the inherent harmonies of its nature. Each soul has a potential Heaven within it, but waiting for peace and sunshine on earth to reveal itself outwardly. The life of Christ is every human being, but when it would bless the world with its outward radiance, it is beset with Judaism, threatened with calumnies and inquisitions, and forthwith continually maltreated, denounced, and crucified! There must come a time, however, when all this persecution of the Christ will cease—a time when His gospel, not the written record of his earthly history, but his vital gospel in each man's heart, will be outwardly lived in every latitude of life. Such a time is the world's promise, its hope, its prophecy, and its instinct.

It has been shown in former numbers that this Christ-life in the heart of each man is misdirected, distorted, and suppressed in its external growth or development by social, civil, and ecclesiastical aggressions, proscriptions, and restraints. That by inharmonious conditions and relations the Christ is everywhere crucified, and man everywhere injured, and educated, and compelled to crime. That he is vicious and depraved by constraint. That he has no native impulse or *conatus* to evil, but on the contrary, that all his innate tendencies are to good, and that they are overruled and turned to evil by social and religious tyrannies and assumptions. Those papers furthermore prove, that at this trouble and ill arises, directly or indirectly, immediately or remotely, from the aggressions upon individual right—from the practical denial of liberty, in its largest sense, to the individual, limited only by the law of justice, without which there is no liberty. That individuality is an institute of nature, and that the full and spontaneous expression of this individuality of character of each man, without injury or hurt to others, or at his own cost, and saving to them their individuality, is what is meant by "The Right to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness," "The Right of Private Judgment," "Liberty of Conscience," etc. That, formalized thus, viz.: "The inalienable right of the individual exercised at his own cost," it is all the constitution, code, or statute book that a life of equity and harmony requires—at once the all of Protestantism and democracy—the law of liberty, justice, equity, and harmony in every relation of life, and in every sphere of existence, and the prophylactic and antiseptic of vice and crime. That injury or hurt to others is the very essence of crime, and that, accordingly, under the above formula of sovereignty "at his own cost," no man can sin or commit a crime, i. e., hurt or injure others, for the obvious reason that he can not do so "at his own cost." That his entire liberty, with its only limitation, is the condition of the true and full development of his manhood, his beauty, and glory, and harmony! That the true society is not an arbitrary external organization of constraints and restraints for the purpose of enforcing order, harmony, and justice among men, but is the spontaneous and concordant result of the full and free expression of all the varieties of individual character, just as the harmony of the octave is the inevitable result of the full expression of each elementary note. Those papers set forth, pretty much in *extenso*, the manner in which the spirit of man is dwarfed and deformed by social, civil, and ecclesiastical aggressions and restraints, and yet that part of the subject is by no means exhausted, but we will say no more on it now. The malady

has already been sufficiently diagnosed, the cause detected, and the cure, which is but the removal of the cause, pointed out. It can be put in a "prescription," or *abrenthized*, thus, viz.: "Cause of crime—Slavery. Cure of crime—Liberty." The subject, though general and comprehensive, yet ramifies in all the details of human life, and when once clearly stated it requires no great effort of the mind to follow it out. There is one branch of it, however, that has not been sufficiently adverted to in the former numbers, viz.: the suppression and misdirection of our native instincts of a future life, and of God, by false and aggressive systems of religion and theology. Let us direct our eye for a while to this region of the inquiry.

Every individual of sane mind ought to be left free to form his own opinions, to the best of his ability, on all religious and theological, as well as all other subjects. No one is responsible, or can take the consequences of his belief, but himself. The formation of his own opinions, or pursuit of his own instincts and impressions, on those subjects, belong to his individuality and sovereignty—is an attribute of his manhood, and for development requires exercise and freedom. Private judgment on these, as on all other subjects, is an inalienable right, and can not be surrendered. To grow to a mature intellectual and spiritual development, and strength, and beauty, it is just as necessary that his mind should be free—that its growth should not be misdirected or suppressed by creeds and catechisms, as it is that his body should be free in order to its full and perfect growth. All his intellectual, moral, and spiritual powers—his reason, sentiment of truth, religious aspirations and devotional instincts, as an indispensable condition of their integral growth, require complete enfranchisement from all coercive restraining and domineering influences. To dwarf or deform their normal growth by the authority of creeds, the insinuation of prejudices, or the force of education, is a cruel and despotic aggression upon individual right. If there be two faculties of the human soul more calculated than others to make a man happy, those two are his native instincts of immortality and deity—those instincts that point to and assure him of a life beyond the sepulcher, and the being and love and worship of God. The strength and importance of those two faculties of the human spirit are testified by the history of their misdirections and perversions—the religious and theological histories of all past ages. The world is covered, and has immemorably been, by the monuments of unnatural and inhuman religious and diabolical theories—the abnormal developments or inversions of these instincts of the human soul originating in the aggressions upon and slavery of those instincts!

Now man has an instinct of his immortality—of his life beyond the tomb. All natural and unsophisticated tribes and nations disclose it. Let the human spirit preserve its simple and early integrity, or let it grow to its full dimensions without distortion or mutilation, and its belief in its own immortality is a necessary consequence of its organization. In all simple, good persons, whose minds have not been preoccupied by artificial systems, instilled by education, or imposed by authority, and have not been deluded by the subtleties and sophisms of philosophy, immortality is the natural and spontaneous belief of their souls. They come to this belief by no fetherish cogitations, abstract logical deductions, nor profound scientific analysis; nor do they come to it by any outside parchment revelations, or mythological traditions, or miracles, signs, or wonders, but it is wrought into their substance by the Author of their existence, authenticated by Heaven, and perpetually immanent in their hearts. It is revealed to them in their own existence, and no theory, creed, or philosophy can expunge it from their natures. This we might have confidently looked for in the all otherwise faithful workmanship of God, for what sane man would suppose that He would so constitute His creature man as to leave him for seventy years in utter ignorance of this momentous fact of his destiny? Like all other powers and faculties of the soul, which testify their objects—like the ear, which testifies sound—like the eye, which testifies light—like the social faculties, which testify their social natures—like reverence and devotion, which point to God and testify his love and worship—the instinct of immortality unequivocally testifies the fact of immortality. But that humanity has such an instinctive belief in a future life needs no argument from my pen. The history of the world proves it—the nations believe it. A more doubtful query is, what kind of immortality do the people naturally believe in? The inquiry is doubtful, because the natural and instinctive belief of man in this regard has been so misdirected and suppressed by the assumptions and dogmas of creeds and opinions as to distort and run it into all absurd and fantastic theories. Its integral growth and development in a free state, and under harmonious conditions and relations, is thwarted and overruled by crude and wild fancies, imposed by authority, inculcated by education, and enforced by example. But let us try and get back to the *innate* faith of the race as to what their future will be.

The natural and spontaneous belief of man touching his trans-sepulchral life is, that he will there exist specifically

and substantially the *same* man he was here; that he will be in the human form, retain his individuality, character, memory, etc.; that he will have the same faculties, loves, passions, and appetites he has here, and enjoy them; that he will have all his senses, organs, members, limbs, etc.; that he will then meet all his kindred, friends, and acquaintances, and love them, and associate with them, etc.; that the theater of his existence there will be much like it is here, only more exalted and beautiful; and that it is not millions of leagues away beyond the distant stars, in the depths of space, but near him on the earth; that the inhabitants of that world even now are near to him, associate with him, watch over him, and love him, and guard him from danger, etc. He believes that the Spirit of man is the *whole* man—the man himself, and not a fog, or vapor, or breath, that floats in a cold and obscure existence, undefined and solitary. This is the faith inscribed upon his nature; and the human heart everywhere throbs with a genial pulse when it is pronounced, and is ever ready to avow and live it when free from usurpation and tyranny. The naturalness of this belief—its intuitive truth—is the true cause of its unparalleled speed among the disenthralled minds of our times. It effectually answers a demand of our nature, which must be met at the peril of our peace and quiet. No other creed will satisfy the race. They will be righteous and happy in no other doctrine. The preservation of this natural and spontaneous faith unperverted is indispensable to the full spiritual development, and tranquility, and harmonization of the individual. The most momentous concern of a man—that which cost him more anguish than any other desiderata—is his future beyond the grave. When this is made doubtful by philosophies, contradicted by science, or periled by the cruel and inhuman conditions and sacrifices of creeds, he can no longer be happy and harmonious, cheerful, blithe, and gay, and come, while yet on earth, to mature development and true manhood; but will become morose and misanthropic, malevolent and selfish, reckless and despairing. No man can be happy, fellowship in harmony with his kind, love mercy, do justly, walk uprightly, and feel his dignity and glory as a man, but at peace with himself and all the world, while his grandest interests are contingent, doubtful, or hazarded by unnatural and erroneous systems of faith. Assure him, by any means—by pretended revelations from Heaven—by authority and education—by reason, science, or philosophy—that his continued existence in a better state beyond the grave is a mistake, a hazard, or a hardly attainable thing, and you suppress and deny an express *instinct* of his nature (which, by the way, proves the provision that is made for it), dwarf his spiritual growth, and lead him to place all the good of life in sense, sensuality, power, wealth, influence, etc., originating and stimulating all the evil passions and cupidities.

The instances of the perversions and suppressions of this natural faith of the human race are so multiplied and various that I do not know where to begin to describe them. We see the simple and all-satisfying faith, that the man will continue to live beyond the tomb—that he will be the *same* man, associate with those he loves, be in a world similar to the present, only better and more beautiful, and not far away, but near to us—that faith to which all men grow in virtue of their constitution—we everywhere see distorted and perverted into a thousand absurd and fantastic opinions and theories, deforming the creature and dishonoring the Creator!

The old orthodox notion of innate depravity, or original sin, is an unmitigated libel upon God and humanity, and when wrought into the belief of man by education or authority debases and deforms his soul, begets a mean and dastardly opinion of himself and all his race; checks his aspirations, degrades his dignity, humiliates him to the dust, and makes him a man-hater, reviler, malinger, and denouncer. His love and honor of humanity are perverted into indifference and contempt; and his joy for its excellence, and beauty, and divinity is changed into sorrow and sadness, regret and despondency. His estimate of human character is poisoned in its very inception, and instead of love, confidence, and respect we have loathing, suspicion and distrust, rebuke and condemnation. We don't naturally suspect men of being reprobate and satanic—of being "prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward"—of being "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." On the contrary, we incline to love, and rely upon our fellows—to credit them with honesty, and truthfulness, and goodwill. The child, in the innocence and purity of its nature, copes with confidence on the honesty, fidelity, and love of all those older than itself. It has no misgivings as to the good faith and brightness of man. What greater perversion of its soul can there be, therefore, be, than educating it to the belief that men are naturally evil, dishonest, and vile—ready, in virtue of their very natures, for lying, deceit, fraud, burglary, and butchery! The debasing influence of this infernal dogma on the human soul, throughout Christendom, is fearful to think of. It is a most diabolical fraud upon the human family, and cheats and robs the spirit of man of its fair growth, and original purity and integrity! It is a monstrous aggression upon the individual. If he were left to form his own opinions upon maturity of intellect, and free from all such despotic as-

sumptions, he would never conclude the diabolism of humanity, but would naturally come to the belief, or, rather, would retain his belief, in its innate purity and integrity.

The doctrines of the "atonement" and "eternal damnation" are also deplorable perversions of the spontaneous faith of man, and outrage the native instincts of the human heart. The common sentiment of humanity revolts at them. They fill the mind with the ideas of vindictiveness, injustice, revenge, and cruelty, and associate its very worship with desire, homicide, and all inhumanity, wretchedness, and woe! These savage dogma originated in the vindictiveness and revenge of the human heart, ere man had approximated true relations with his fellow-man. The "atonement" and "eternal hell" are the legitimate correspondences of vindictiveness and revenge, and result from them by the law, that like produces like. The evil man thinks and believes evil—the vengeful man's mind is perpetually upon punishment and cruelty—while the really good man believes good of all things. The belief in the cruel sacrifice of the atonement, Divine wrath, eternal hell, etc., when instilled into the mind, bring with them, by inevitable sequence, the passions of cruelty, injustice, vindictiveness, and revenge, with which they are *en rapport*, and stifle and pervert all the genial loves and humanitarian emotions of the human heart. The advocates of these dogma are, of course, inflexible, unmerciful, cruel, and vindictive. It is peculiarly a persecuting faith. In all the history of opinions, nothing parallels orthodox anathemas, implacability, and vindictiveness. It is as unyielding and despotic as the Divine wrath it preaches, claiming the prerogative of imposing opinions and prescribing conscience by a right Divine! The influence of these dogma for evil on the human mind is incalculable. They pervert, in its earliest bloom, the native integrity of the soul, misdirect its faculties, usurp its instinctive faith, and poison the holiest affections of the heart!

Now man can not grow to his full spiritual dimensions while these unnatural doctrines enslave his mind. They thwart his normal development, misdirect his natural and spontaneous faith in his immortality and the nearness, etc., of the Spirit-world; his association, etc., with Spirits; their guardianship, and his continued existence in a world similar to this one, only brighter and better; the same man he was before, etc.

It was my intention, when I commenced this article, to show, also, how the popular theories of the times contradict our intuitions of Deity, and our spontaneous love and worship of God. But to do so now would run this communication out to too great a length. It is accordingly postponed to a future number.

October 20, 1853.

## MOSAIC ACCOUNT OF CREATION.

EXTENDED FRIEND, S. B. BRITTON:

Will thou permit me to say a few words on some matters embraced in the article of thy correspondent, J. R. Orton, in the TELEGRAPH of the 22d inst., which has just come to hand? He says: "It is a subject of regret that the influences of Spiritualism should be so much directed to the undermining of Christianity, and that in the present stage of these interesting investigations, such a disposition should be manifest to establish a sect in opposition to the Bible." Now, to my apprehension—and I have been a somewhat interested observer and reader—the general tendency of Spiritualism (meaning by the term the communications purporting to come from the Spirit-world, those of A. J. Davis included) is to *establish* genuine Christianity; not the speculative absurdities which too commonly pass for it, but that religion, the essence of which is love to God and man. In other words, their object is to establish in the human family, the world over, the perception and practice of God's truth, and thus bring mankind into harmonious relation with the universal Parent, and with each other. So far, then, as the Bible is a part of that truth, there can, of course, be no opposition to it; and if, on examination, it be found to contain error as well as truth, surely no lover of truth and goodness can object to the exposure of those errors. To be otherwise minded would be to desire that mankind should accept error for truth, and by its practice bring upon themselves all the evils which are the inevitable concomitants. And the establishment of a sect of any kind is one of the last things, I think, that can, with any color of justice, be brought against the class of writings to which thy correspondent alludes. The condemnation of sectarianism is one of their most marked and uniform features. On the contrary, they can not be said of the "Aulic Disclamations," and writings of similar kind, in their leaning to the popular so-called orthodox doctrines of which thy correspondent expresses his approval. But of this presently.

A word now touching the account of the creation, in the book of Genesis. Let that account be read without prejudice or passion, and nothing can be clearer, it seems to me, than that the writer or writers believed that the earth on which they found themselves was the great center of creation, and that the sun, moon, and stars were but so many incidents and

tributaries formed for its convenience and use, and of small comparative magnitude. The true character of our solar system was yet undreamed of—much less had a conception obtained of the existence of countless other systems, still more immense, of which, except a few solar planets, the stars that twinkled in the blue concave were so many suns and centers. Starting with this idea of the earth's relative magnitude and importance, it was very natural to assign to its production *priority in order of time*, and not aware that the earth was mainly dependent on the sun for its light, and that day and night were the result of the earth's changing position to the sun, in its rotation on its axis, and not aware, either, that without the light and heat derived from the sun's action, vegetation could not exist, they did not perceive the incongruity of making day and night alternately to occur for three successive days before, in their theory of creation, the sun had been formed, and the earth, meantime, teeming with vegetation, from grass to tree, leaf, and bud, and blossom, and fruit, flourishing in luxuriance!

Again: The philosophy of rain was not understood. Observation and experiment had not demonstrated that the clouds floating in the earth's atmosphere were supplied with water by evaporation from the earth, and those "gathering together" which they tell us God "called seas," and as occasion required, in the wise and beneficent provisions of the great Disposer, poured forth their contents to refresh and invigorate the earth and its denizens. Hence, to account for the rain descending from above, they supposed that similar collection of water, or "seas," existed at a distance overhead, resting on an expanded structure or firmament. The language of the text is: "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of (between) the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament." And again: "Carrying out the idea of the earth's comparative magnitude, as engrossing in its production and the production of what pertained to it, at least five sixths of the labor of forming the universe—on the fourth day, when the sun and moon were created—the next two apparently greatest of visible objects—it is added: "He made the stars also." All this the work of one day, and "the stars" a trifling part of that work, deserving merely an incidental notice! And why should they—those little lights that faintly sparkled in the cerulean arch—why should they have a more conspicuous position in the history of the formation of this mighty world of ours, creation's center? They were but the earth's tinsel garniture—the drapery thrown around it.

Now all this was perfectly natural. No blame should attach to the writer or writers. Had we been in their place, with the then immaturity of science, it is not likely we should have done any better, or that our conclusions would have been more in accordance with fact. It was but "the twilight of existence," as I remember one of the ancients, in a communication that I deem highly reliable, has said. The folly is, in the present era of advanced discovery and knowledge, in claiming for writings penned in those remote ages of comparative unprogression, and bearing indubitable evidence of imperfection and error, not merely in regard to the facts of external nature—which were of less moment, but more abundantly defective in morals and religion—the folly is in claiming for such writings the character of infallible inspiration, and taxing human ingenuity to retain for them this character.

Thy correspondent, though more liberal in his views than most of the advocates of the prevailing theology, seems to have fallen into this mistake. To save the account of the creation in Genesis from the inconsistencies referred to by A. J. Davis, he assumes that that account was not intended as a description of the formation of the universe, but "relates almost exclusively to this earth." Now, though the earth is indeed the main subject of the history, because, in the estimation of the writers, the main thing, nothing can be clearer than that it was intended to embrace the whole of creation. It begins by saying, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and after describing the work of the six days, concludes, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." And again: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created." He also assumes that the days mentioned were not intended as six literal days, produced by the earth's revolution, but as six great periods of time. But such an hypothesis is opposed to the most natural import of language, and incompatible with the context. The account says specifically, "The evening and the morning were the first day," etc. Or, as it is in the Hebrew, "And there was evening and there was morning two days," and so on throughout the six. Now I would like to know how *morning* and *evening* came into being without the earth's revolution relative to the sun, or can with propriety be predicated of any other state of things. That six natural days were intended is, notwithstanding our friend Orton's exegesis, plain as human language could make it, by the institution of the Jewish Sabbath being based on the alleged fact of God's rest-







Reported Phonographically by T. J. Ellsworth.

My friends then told a parable that purported to come from the *Book of Heli*:

Forasmuch Remembrance had been long impugned with little from the *Book of Heli*, and by which he had figured gradually into a knowledge of the nature and participation of mankind, both in the natural and spiritual world. The cause of his suffering in the inequality of our physical and mental being. It may indeed be traced to this physical and material condition, but it would be wrong for them to analyze that, for it is to analyze more to perform a more accurate operation in chemistry, for one of the faculties which we were in that state of life, we have in ourselves, but in different degree. What first is in harmony with himself, men are in all the different degrees of perfection. The human mind is in a combination of truth and falsity. The divine mind is the fulcrum of truth. If we strengthen that which is weak, that tends to weakness and to death, and sub due that which is, in process, to be true, we receive into a state of being, of being, mentally and physically, we are in sympathetic relation to the divine Being. The speaker illustrated this point by referring to

It was proposed to suppose that the *facies Nervosa* and the *facies Sanguinea* were the result of the different size of the "factors" of life, of the specific of the human mind and of the individuality of natural beings. Even so, of corresponding general development could not derive an absolute concept of opinion. "This was quite as impossible as it would be to annihilate their separate individualities. Ask any two men to describe the same object, and their descriptions will not exactly agree. No two lectures give the same description of the same nature. Each individual takes every thing from his own stand point, and his own point of view is different from that of the lecturer. The lecturer said that in these particular circumstances there was Spite rather than Fear entertained, and for some he thought they were would be. If we had any source of infallible information, we could facilitate the human mind would be gratified for most of our superstitions for their natural reason. If we had enough to make these responses known to be the absolute truth, we should cease to analyze, and to compare, and to reason. This must be the fatal blow would be produced, and the mind utterly preclude the formation of development of the spirit.

The speaker further illustrated this theory by supposing a number of men the act of describing a mountain. They occupying a different point of view, they would have a very different views of the mountain (landscape) and their descriptions would vary accordingly. The mind would take

[illegible][illegible]

Entrailed into a golden orb of light  
 I am heaven's vast delight round me run,  
 From its own motion made intensely bright,  
 Encouraging, with true Madonna zone,  
 God's inner sphere, perfect, supreme, alone.  
  
 Here let me gather thoughts, as heaven for eyes  
 Together all the stars into its day,  
 And let me form from their sphere sublime  
 A glorious Poem, fragrant, pure, divine—  
 An Epig of the World. Oh! thus my theme  
 I aver my soul's desire, O Lord supreme!  
 Give me to breathe a charm of love so full,  
 That Earth shall from it drink the lifeblood,  
 As angels rapture from Thy infinite  
 Sweet melody of love and love's delight,  
 And wake to joy, as might a widowed bride,  
 Who, starting, finds the lost one by her side.  
 Immortal life, love, rapture—in her eyes,  
 A fire-gleam sun descended from the skies!

[illegible]



